

**CONSTITUTION OF THE**

**SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION**

**OF**

**SOCIAL WORKERS**

**[SLASOW]**

**2016**

# **Constitution of the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers [SLASOW]**

## **Article 1: Name**

The name of the association shall be the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers [SLASOW] Sierra Leone, here in called `` The Association``.

## **Article 2: status**

The Association shall be non governmental and non political. It is not specific to any religion nor tribe

This constitution shall be the supreme document of the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers { SLASOW} and if any resolution, decision or action is inconsistent with this constitution, this constitution shall prevail, and the resolution, decision or action shall to the extent of its inconsistency be null and void.

## **Article 3: Place of operation**

The operation of the association shall be throughout Sierra Leone and its head office shall be situated in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone.

## **Article 4: Objectives of the Association**

The objectives of the association shall be:

- To provide support to social workers in the practice of the profession
- To represent the views of social workers on matters of social policy and practice at local, national and international level
- To develop a sense of pride amongst social workers of their profession
- To be advocates for the interests of social worker clients at national level
- To promote awareness of the contribution of social work to society
- To ensure that social workers in Sierra Leone engage in ongoing professional development and capacity building

## **Article 5: Membership**

Membership of the association is divided into four categories namely:

### **Full membership**

To be composed of those who have been awarded a professional qualification in social work /social development which is recognised by the national tertiary education commission of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

### **Student membership**

To be composed of students who are undergoing courses of training in social work recognised by the association, students are not entitled to vote

### **Associate membership**

Shall be open to people who qualify for full membership, they are not in social work practice but opt to become associate members. Associate members do have voting power

### **Honorary membership**

Shall be persons who, in the opinion of the association have done distinguished work furthering the objective of the association. They may be elected at an Annual General Meeting {AGM} of the association. Honorary members shall have full voting rights

### **Application for membership**

Application for membership shall be made by the completion of the respective application form as would be provided by the Association

### **Membership fee**

The calendar year of the Association shall last from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Each member of the association is required to pay an annual membership fee. Membership fee shall be due on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February every year. The National Executive Committee {NEC} may from time to time amend the fees and dues, subject to the approval of Annual General Meeting {AGM}. Membership fees will be the same for different categories of membership except for student membership

### **Termination of membership**

Membership of the association shall cease

- on death of member
- on resignation of member
- if one becomes of unsound mind

the national executive committee {NEC} may be by resolution, dismiss member for a very serious breach of the social work code of ethics.

A dismissed member may appeal to a national executive committee {NEC} for reinstatement stating grounds for such action

### **Article 6: Organs of the sierra Leone association of social workers {SLASOW} and their duties**

#### **The Annual General Meeting {AGM}**

The AGM will be the highest decision making body of SLASOW

The president's annual report and the plan of action of the new financial year will be discussed at the AGM

Receive and approve financial reports of SLASOW

Elect office bearers term of office is over as bye elections replace vacant posts

Review, discuss, and approve/disapprove, modify constitutional amendments

#### **The General Meeting {GM}**

The General Meeting shall be any meeting of all the members of the association of all branches and may be called any time during the year by the national executive committee {NEC} stating the purpose, issues to be resolved, venue and time.

Pertinent issues of the Association will be discussed at the General Meeting

#### **The National Executive Committee {NEC}**

Shall be responsible for the following duties:

Provide strategic leadership to the association

oversee the day to day national business of the association

planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme of action

promote or authorize the establishment of new branches and projects

coordinate the activities of the branches

#### **Board of trustees:**

The Association will have a board of trustees who shall be the guardian of **SLASOW** and protect the legal and property rights of the association. These shall be five people including the patron

### **Branch General Meetings**

The branch general meetings shall be a meeting of the members of the branch to consider the affairs of the respective branches

### **Branch Executive Committee {BEC}**

Shall plan and administer the activities of their respective branches according to this constitution and be fully answerable for the success or failures thereof

### **Article 7: Officials of the association**

#### **The national executive committee**

The national executive committee shall comprise of the following

The president

The vice president

General secretary

Assistant General secretary

Treasurer and additional members who shall be the chairpersons of the branch executive committee

#### **The branch executive committee {BEC}**

There shall be a branch executive committee comprising of the following

Chairperson

Vice chairperson

Secretary

Assistant secretary

Treasury

Two additional members

### **Article 8: Duties and powers of the officials of the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers {SLASOW}**

#### **Duties and powers of the national executive committee**

##### **The President**

The president shall perform the following duties.

Provide leadership and direction to the Association

Preside at the executive committee meetings and general meetings

Be the head of SLASOW executive committee

Have powers to call for emergency meetings

Represent the association in all forms both national and international and uphold a positive image of the association

Shall present an annual report to the Annual General Meeting at the end of the year

Shall be co – signatory to the associations bank account

##### **The vice president**

Shall deputize/ assist the president carry out the above duties

May perform all other duties assigned by the president

##### **The secretary General**

Be responsible to summon all meetings of the association in consultation with the president

Shall facilitate minutes and record keeping at all meetings of the association

Carry out other duties assigned by the president

### **The Assistant Secretary General**

Deputizes the General Secretary in the above duties

Carry out any other duties as determined by the General Secretary

### **The Treasurer**

Is overall responsible for the associations financial administration

Shall collect all monies payable to **SLASOW** and bank it into the Associations bank account

Shall be the principal signatory of the **SLASOW 'S** bank account

Shall prepare and present audited account to the annual general meeting

Shall carry out other duties as determined by the executive committee

### **The patron**

The duties of the patron shall be

Guide and counsel the association

promote the image and activities of **SLASOW**

### **Duties and powers of the branch committees**

The branch executive committees shall be responsible for planning and administration of their respective branches in accordance with this constitution and shall prepare and submit quarterly reports to the **NEC**. The branch officials shall be individually responsible for the following duties

#### **Branch chairperson**

Preside over all branch meetings

Provide leadership at the branches

Represent the board on the **NEC**

Any other duties presumed by the constitution at branch level

#### **Branch vice chairperson**

Deputy/assistant of the chairperson

#### **Branch secretary**

Duties similar to that of the Secretary General but performed at branch level

### **Article 9: meetings**

Meeting of the association shall include:

#### **National Executive Committee {NEC} meeting**

The NEC meeting shall be held at least once in three months. One third of members present shall form the quorum of the meeting

### **Annual General Meeting**

The annual general meeting shall be a meeting of all members of **SLASOW** held at least once within the last three months of each year.

The president's annual report and the treasurers financial report will be received and discussed at the **AGM**

The election of new office bearers at the end of term or bye elections will also take place at the **AGM**

## **General Meetings**

General meetings shall be called when the need arise, as when there are important issues to decide.

General meetings of **SLASOW** may only proceed if one- third of the total membership is present at such meeting.

## **Extra ordinary meetings**

An extra ordinary meting may be held under the following circumstances

when called by the executive committee

When called by written demand by at least a third of total membership stating the reason for the demand

## **Article 10: Election**

### **Term of office**

Term of office for the office bearers shall be a period of three years. The president shall not be eligible for re -election in the same office more than two consecutive terms

### **Types of elections**

Elections shall be held during the sitting of the **AGM**

There shall be two categories of elections:

### **General Elections**

Shall be the election of a new executive committee ending the term of office and affect the dissolution of the incumbent committee

### **Bye election**

Shall be held whenever an office falls vacant due to:

Death of an executive committee member

Resignation of executive committee

Dismissal of executive member

If one becomes of unsound mind

Any other cause decided by the general assembly

Before the bye elections, the executive shall temporarily appoint among themselves a person to take care of the vacant office

### **Eligibility to vote and to be voted into office**

Only fully paid up members are eligible to vote. Non Sierra Leonean citizens who qualify as full members shall be eligible for election into any office, provided they are resident in Sierra Leone and hold valid work permits for their tenure in office

### **Procedures for elections**

The outgoing executive shall be dissolved, a returning officer shall then be elected among the members to conduct elections. Nominations for president, General secretary and treasurer of **NEC** shall be by filling in forms provided by the secretariat and submitted not less than ten days before the date of the **AGM**

The nomination forms shall bear the following:

Name and signature of candidate

Names and signature of two proposers who are full members of **SLASOW**

Names of the candidates [for the positions of president, General secretary and treasurer of **NEC**] shall be displayed for members to view and candidates shall be given or allowed 30 minutes to address the meeting so as to canvas support.

The president, General secretary, treasurer and committee shall be elected by the **AGM** after end of the term of the current executive committee.

The president and the General Secretary, shall nominate their deputies [ i.e. vice president and assistant General secretary respectively] whose names shall be presented before the **AGM** for approval on election day. Procedures for elections at branch level shall be the same as for **NEC**

#### **Article 11: Removal from SLASOW office**

in the event that an executive member fails to perform expected duties, the following procedures shall take place

The president may discuss the matter with the executive member

If there is no improvement, the president may on the advice of the executive committee discuss the matter at a general meeting

The office bearer may be suspended by General meeting if he /she fails to perform duties The General meeting may on petition by any of the members pass a vote of no confidence on

any **SLASOW** executive member

president

The entire **SLASOW** executive

The Association, may by resolution at a general meeting appoint another person to replace the removed office bearer

#### **Article 12: Financial administration**

##### **Revenue**

income will comprise of membership fees, fund raising activities, contribution, donations , sponsorship, gifts and income generating activities

##### **Bank accounts**

The bank account of **SLASOW** shall be opened and maintained in such a bank account as the committee shall determine, all monies of the association must be properly banked. All bank cheques under the jurisdiction of the **NEC** shall be signed for on behalf of **SLASOW** by the treasurer and president, while at the branch level, it shall be the branch treasurer and the chairperson or the secretary

##### **Financial year**

The financial year of the association shall be from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> every year. The treasurer shall during this period prepare and have a written audit report to present to the **AGM**

##### **Appointment of auditors**

An auditor shall be appointed at the **AGM** and shall serve until the first sitting of the new executive committee in the following term of office but shall be eligible for reappointment The association will remunerate and regulate the duties of the auditors

#### **Article 13: code of ethics**

The association must maintain a written code of Ethics, which after adoption by the General Assembly shall be binding on all registered members

The code of Ethics shall establish professional values and standards of conduct expected of social workers in different situations

The code of Ethics shall also establish principles that should underlie the value and standard of conduct

The Association will review the code of Ethics every three years. Any amendment of the code of Ethics shall take effect after it has been discussed and adopted by the **AGM**

Copies of the code of Ethics to be made available to all members of the Association

**Article 14: amendment to the constitution**

Any repeal, amendment or addition to the constitution may be made by a resolution passed by two-thirds of those members present and voting at the **AGM** or a special General meeting.

Amendment of the constitution shall be a regular item on the agenda of the **AGM**

**Article 15: Dissolution of the Sierra Leone Association of Social Workers -SLASOW**

The **SLASOW** or a branch may be dissolved only by a resolution passed by at least two – thirds of the members of the **AGM** called for that purpose. All monies standing to the credit of the association after paying all debts and liabilities shall be donated to similar associations or used to set up student bursaries

President General Secretary

Date ..... Date.....